



Matt Blunt
Governor

State of Missouri
Office of Homeland Security
Department of Public Safety
Post Office Box 749
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone 573-522-3007 Fax 573-522-6109

Michael Chapman
Director

Testimony of Michael Chapman, Missouri Homeland Security Director

Before:

The House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science, and Technology

April 12, 2005

Michael Chapman:

Chairman Cox, Chairman King, Ranking Member Pascrell and other members of the subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me here today to talk about the critical issue of Homeland Security Grant spending. I am honored to be here to relate to you the efforts that my governor, Matt Blunt, has undertaken in Missouri to ensure that every single Homeland Security dollar the federal government awards Missouri is utilized to protect, prepare for and respond to terrorism-related emergencies in our state, or if need be, in neighboring states.

On February 8, 2005, less than one month after his inauguration, Governor Blunt issued a memorandum to his department directors asking for information regarding Homeland Security Grant spending. Specifically, Governor Blunt asked his department directors for:

- “A detailed analysis of what federal homeland security money that your department has received and how it was spent
- A list of grant requests that your department has made for federal homeland security money
- A list of any private company or any locality your department has partnered with to petition for federal homeland security grant funding; and

- A plan that lays out how your particular department might be able to utilize federal homeland security money to better prepare for and protect the public in case of a future incident ”

Governor Blunt asked for this information because of two specific incidents in Missouri that caused him to question the wisdom with which Homeland Security dollars had been spent by the previous administration. The first incident involved my predecessor negotiating a contract with a company for a web portal that would have in essence provided duplicative communications capabilities to emergency responders. After this contract had been shepherded through to near completion, my predecessor went to work for the company. Governor Blunt has made very clear that even the appearance of impropriety in government contracting will not be tolerated in his administration and this “raised flags” that other Homeland Security spending ought to be examined to ensure that it was appropriate and that it contributed in a meaningful way to the preparedness and protection of Missourians.

The second incident was cited in the House Select Committee on Homeland Security’s report “An Analysis of First Responder Grant Funding” and involved the purchase of approximately 13,000 chem-bio warfare suits, one for nearly every full-time law enforcement officer in the state. Some of the communities that received these suits needed them and are better prepared to respond to terrorist attacks because they have them. However, one would be hard pressed to justify this spending for EVERY full-time law enforcement officer in our state. Missouri has many rural areas where it was inappropriate for these suits to have been purchased and it is clear that other equipment may have been a greater contributor to the safety of residents in those communities. Governor Blunt believes that regional solutions to responding to chemical-biological warfare should be explored.

My office and the State Emergency Management Agency which administers Homeland Security Grant funding for Missouri are in the process of evaluating the reports from department directors which were due on March 31, 2005. We plan to provide an executive summary of our findings to the governor this week so that he can make informed decisions about how to better protect Missourians. Initial indications are that a comprehensive Homeland Security plan to protect Missouri needs to be further developed, refined and enhanced so that we can adequately respond in the unfortunate circumstance that a response would be necessary.

In no way should my testimony be construed to suggest that Missouri is vulnerable or that the previous administration jeopardized our citizens’ safety. The

simple reality though is that Governor Blunt is certain we can do better in terms of efficiently and effectively spending Homeland Security funds. Governor Blunt is committed to learning from others' past mistakes and taking proactive steps to ensure that my office and the other executive departments that are part of his administration are appropriately utilizing these valuable federal resources to protect Missourians. After all that is why you, the federal government, provide us with this money.

Governor Blunt has also made structural changes to the Office of Homeland Security in Missouri to ensure that an integrated and coordinated system is in place to meet Missouri's Homeland Security needs. He merged the Office of Homeland Security into the Department of Public Safety to foster collaboration and synergy between my office and the various divisions within the Department. Public Safety houses Missouri's Capitol Police, Division of Alcohol and Tobacco Control, Fire Safety, Highway Patrol, Water Patrol, Adjutant General and Emergency Management Agency. By having Homeland Security reside in the same department as these other agencies, I am better able to coordinate and plan for the safety and security of Missourians and will be better able to coordinate the administration of Homeland Security grant money that the federal government provides.

Homeland Security grant funding is a non-partisan issue and something that we should be constantly reexamining to ensure that we are doing it correctly both at the state and federal level. Missouri is in the process of doing just that but it makes a great deal of sense to have hearings such as this one to discuss what we're doing right, what we can do better and where we might make changes, modifications and corrections in the way that we partner together to provide safety and security for the nation as a whole and states individually.

As I understand it, Chairman Cox's First Responder bill directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to determine essential capabilities for different types of communities based upon an analysis of critical infrastructure sectors, types of threat, geography, population (including commuting and tourist), vulnerability, consequences, and intelligence information regarding emerging threats among other things. It is clear that standards defining threats and preparedness goals would assist states in preventing terrorist attacks. As these standards and goals are developed though, it will be important to take non-traditional terrorism, such as agro-terrorism, into account.

We have learned a great deal through the examination of previous Homeland Security grant spending by states and the federal government has responded based

on findings from those studies. This reexamination and retooling should be an ongoing process no matter what modifications are made to the grant formula, whether it be the adoption of the risk-based approach or some variant thereof. Constantly evaluating and reevaluating how best to prepare for, prevent and protect against attacks is the business that we are in, and it is not one where an approach that is adopted today necessarily will be the right one beyond the foreseeable future.

Thank you again for inviting me to testify about this important issue and the steps Governor Blunt has taken to ensure we are the best stewards of the resources you give us that we can possibly be. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.